

شرح رسالة أصل دين الإسلام وقاعدته

Sharh Risalah Asl Din al-Islam wa
Qa'idatah

AN EXPLANATION OF
AN ESSAY OF THE FOUNDATION AND
ROOT OF THE DIN OF ISLAM

SHAYKH 'ABDUR-RAHMAN IBN HASAN AL ASH-SHAYKH



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**AN ESSAY ON THE FOUNDATION OF THE
DIN OF ISLAM AND ITS ROOT**

SHAYKH 'ABDUR-RAHMAN IBN HASAN AL ASH-SHAYKH



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MATN RISALAH ASL DIN AL-ISLAM WA QA'IDATUHU

(The Text of the Essay of the Foundation and Root of the Din of Islam)

By Shaykh al-Mujaddid Muhammad ibn 'Abdil-Wahhab (*rahimahullah*)

The foundation and root of the *din* of Islam is in two matters: First, the command to worship Allah alone with no partner attributed to Him, to incite towards that, to ally based upon it, and to perform *takfir* of whomever leaves it. Second, warning from *shirk* in the worship of Allah, being firm in that, having hostility based on it, and *takfir* of whomever performs it. Those who oppose this are different types; the worst of which is the one who opposes them all:

And from the people are those who worship Allah alone, but do not reject *shirk*, nor have enmity to its people. And from them are those who have enmity to them, but do not declare *takfir* of them. And from them is one who does not love *tawhid* nor does he hate it. And from them is one who claims declaring *takfir* of them (i.e. the *mushrikin*) is cursing the righteous. And from them is one who does not hate *shirk* nor loves it. And from them is one who does not know *shirk* nor rejects it. And from them is one who does not know *tawhid* nor rejects it. And from them - and he is the most dangerous type - is the one who acts upon *tawhid* but does not know its worth; he does not hate whoever leaves it nor declares *takfir* of them. And from them is the one who left *shirk* and hates it but does not know its status; he does not have enmity towards its people nor declares *takfir* of them. All of these [types] have opposed the *din* of Allah (*subhanahu ta'ala*) in which the Prophets came with. And Allah knows best.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

SHARH RISALAH ASL DIN AL-ISLAM WA QA'IDATUHU (An Explanation of the Essay of the Foundation and Root of the Din of Islam)

By Shaykh ‘Abdur-Rahman ibn Hasan Al ash-Shaykh (*rahimahullah*)

His (*rahimahullahu ta‘ala*) statement:

The foundation and root of the *din* of Islam is in two matters: First, the command to worship Allah alone with no partner attributed to Him, to incite towards that, to ally based upon it, and to perform *takefir* of whoever leaves it.

I say: The proofs for this in the Quran are more than one can count, such as His (*ta‘ala*) statement,

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى كَلِمَةٍ سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ

“Say: O People of the Book, come to a word that is just between us and you: that we worship none but Allah and that we associate no partners with Him and that none of us shall take others as lords besides Allah.”¹

Allah ordered His prophet to call the People of the Book to the meaning of ‘*la ilaha illallah*’ which he called the Arabs and others to, as well. And ‘a word’ is: ‘*la ilaha illallah*’ and that is explained by His saying ‘that we worship none but Allah’. So His statement: ‘that we worship none’ carries the meaning of ‘*la ilaha*’, and it is negating worship that is done for other than Allah. And His statement: ‘but Allah’ is the exception in *kalimatul-ikhlās* (the statement of

¹ Al ‘Imran: 64.

sincerity). Thus He (*ta'ala*) commanded that he call them to restrict worship for Him alone and to negate it for anything else. The likes of this *ayah* are abundant. They explain that *ilahiyyah* is worship (*'ibadah*) and that none of it is suitable for other than Allah, as He (*ta'ala*) says,

وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ

“And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him.”²

And the meaning of ‘decreed’ is: commanded and enjoined. Two words whose meanings are the same. His words: ‘that you worship none’ means: ‘*la ilaha*’, and the meaning of ‘but Him’ is: ‘*illallah*’.

This is the *tawhid* of *'ibadah*, and it is the call of the Messengers when they said to their people,

اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرُهُ

“Worship Allah! you have no other *ilah* but Him.”³

And there is no alternative here except to negate *shirk* and dissociate from it and whoever performs it, as He (*ta'ala*) said about His *khalil* Ibrahim (*'alayhis-salam*),

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِ إِنَّنِي بَرَاءٌ مِّمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ إِلَّا الَّذِي فَطَرَنِي

“And when Ibrahim said to his father and his people: ‘Indeed, I am free from that which you worship. Except for He who created me.’”⁴

Thus there is no option but to dissociate from the worship that is done to other than Allah. He (*ta'ala*) says about him (*'alayhis-salam*), as well,

² Al-Isra: 23.

³ Al-Muminun: 32.

⁴ az-Zukhruf: 26-7.

وَأَعْتَزِّلُكُمْ وَمَا تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ

“And I will leave you and those you invoke besides Allah.”⁵

So it is obligatory to leave shirk and its people with *bara'ah* (disassociation) from both, as he declared in His (*ta'ala*) statement,

قَدْ كَانَتْ لَكُمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ فِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ إِذْ قَالُوا لِقَوْمِهِمْ إِنَّا بُرَاءُ مِنْكُمْ وَمِمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ كَفَرْنَا بِكُمْ وَبَدَا بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ الْعَدَاوَةُ وَالْبَغْضَاءُ أَبَدًا حَتَّى تُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَحْدَهُ

“Indeed, there has been an excellent example for you in Ibrahim and those with him, when they said to their people: ‘Verily, we are free from you and whatever you worship besides Allah; we have rejected you, and there has appeared between us and you, hostility and hatred for ever until you believe in Allah alone.’”⁶

‘And those with him,’ refers to the Messengers, as ibn Jarir [at-Tabari] mentioned. This *ayah* includes everything that our shaykh (*rahimahullah*) cited: inciting *tawhid*, negating *shirk*, allying with the people of *tawhid*, *takfir* of whoever leaves it by performing *shirk*. For indeed, whoever performs *shirk* has left *tawhid*. And without a doubt, they are both opposites that can not be reconciled together. Thus when *shirk* is present, *tawhid* is absent.

He (*ta'ala*) said in relation to the one who commits *shirk*,

وَجَعَلَ لِلَّهِ أَنْدَادًا لِيُضِلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ قُلُوبًا تَمَتَّعُ بِكُفْرِكَ قَلِيلًا إِنَّكَ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ النَّارِ

“And he ascribes rivals to Allah to misguide (people) from His way. Say: ‘Enjoy your *kufir* for a little while; indeed, you are of the companions of the

⁵ Maryam: 48.

⁶ Al-Mumtahanah: 4.

Fire.’”⁷

So He (*ta‘ala*) declared the *kufr* (i.e. *takefir*) of the one who took rivals and partners in worship. And the likes of these *ayat* are many. Therefore, one can not be a *muwahhid* except by negating *shirk*, dissociating from it, and *takefir* of whoever does it.

Then he (*rahimabullahu ta‘ala*) said,

Second, warning from *shirk* in the worship of Allah, being firm in that, having hostility based on it, and *takefir* of whomever performs it.

The establishment of *tawhid* will not be complete except with these matters; and it is the *din* of the Messengers. All of them warned their people from *shirk*, as He (*ta‘ala*) said,

وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُوا الصَّاعُوتَ

“And verily, We have sent to every *ummah* (community of people) a messenger (proclaiming): ‘Worship Allah, and avoid the *taghut*.’”⁸

And He (*ta‘ala*) said,

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِي إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدُونِ

“And We did not send any messenger before you (O Muhammad) except that We inspired to him: ‘There is none worthy of worship except Me, so worship Me (alone).’”⁹

And He (*ta‘ala*) said,

⁷ Az-Zumar: 8.

⁸ An-Nahl: 36.

⁹ Al-Anbiya: 25.

وَأَذْكُرُ أَخَا عَادٍ إِذْ أَنْذَرَ قَوْمَهُ بِالْأَحْقَافِ وَقَدْ خَلَتِ النُّذُرُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا اللَّهَ

“And remember (Hud) the brother of ‘Ad, when he warned his people in the (region of) Ahqaf. And surely, there have passed away warners before him and after him (saying): ‘Worship none but Allah.’”¹⁰

His statement: ‘in the worship of Allah’, worship being: a comprehensive noun that entails everything that Allah loves and is pleased with, whether they be statements or actions, both hidden and apparent.

His statement: ‘being firm in that’, finds its presence in the Book and Sunnah, like His (*ta‘ala*) saying,

فَافْرُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ إني لَكُم مِّنْهُ نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ وَلَا تَجْعَلُوا مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ إني لَكُم مِّنْهُ نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ

“So flee to Allah. Indeed, I am a plain warner to you from Him. And do not set up another deity along with Allah. Verily, I am a plain warner to you from Him.”¹¹

Had it not been for being firm upon this, Quraysh would not have harmed the Prophet (*sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*) or his companions with the mighty torment they inflicted on them, as it has been mentioned in detail within the biography of the Prophet. And indeed, he began by cursing their religion and vilifying their objects of worship.

His statement: ‘having hostility based on it’, is as He (*ta‘ala*) said,

فَاقْتُلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ حَيْثُ وَجَدْتُمُوهُمْ وَخُذُوهُمْ وَأَخْصِرُواهُمْ وَاقْعُدُوا لَهُمْ كُلَّ مَرْصِدٍ

¹⁰ Al-Ahqaf: 21.

¹¹ Adh-Dhariyat: 50-1.

“So kill the *musbrikin* (those who commit *shirk*) wherever you find them, and capture them, besiege them, and sit in wait for them at every place of ambush.”¹²

The *ayat* about this are very many, such as His saying,

وَقَاتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّى لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ وَيَكُونَ الدِّينُ كُلُّهُ لِلَّهِ

“And fight them until there is no more *fitnah* and the *din* is exclusively for Allah.”¹³

Fitnah is *shirk*;¹⁴ and He (*ta‘ala*) labeled the people of *shirk* with *kufr* in an ample amount of *ayat*. Therefore, it is necessary for us to declare *takefir* of them. This is what ‘*la ilaha illallah*’ - the statement of sincerity - requires. Its meaning will not be complete except by *takefir* of whoever sets up with Allah a partner in worship, as in the *hadith*,

Whoever says ‘*la ilaha illallah*’ and rejects whatever is worshipped besides Allah, his wealth and blood becomes forbidden, and his reckoning rests with Allah.¹⁵

His words ‘and rejects whatever is worshipped besides Allah’ is stressing the negation. Thus the blood and wealth of an individual is not protected except by this. So if he doubts or is hesitant, his blood and wealth is not protected. These matters complete *tawhid*. Because ‘*la ilaha illallah*’ has been further explained in the *ahadith* by certain qualifications: with knowledge, sincerity, truthfulness, certainty, and having no doubts. Therefore, a person can not be considered a *muwabbid* except with the existence of all these simultaneously. Believing in it, accepting it, loving it, having enmity and loyalty based on it, as

¹² At-Tawbah: 5.

¹³ Al-Anfal: 39.

¹⁴ Publisher: Imam al-Baghawi said in his *tafsir* of the relevant *ayah*, “Meaning: *shirk*. [...] until the *din* is purely for Allah with no *shirk* found in it.” Ibn ‘Abbas, al-Hasan, Qatadah, as-Sadi, ibn Jurayj, and others all said what is being referred to in the *ayah* as ‘*fitnah*’ is *shirk*. See *Tafsir at-Tabari*.

¹⁵ Muslim, ch. al-Iman (23). Ahmad (3/472, 6/394).

well. So when these matters are collected together, then, what our shaykh (*rahimahullah*) mentioned comes to pass.

Then he (*rahimahullah*) stated,

Those who oppose this are different types: the worst of which is the one who opposes them all.

This one accepts *shirk* and believes it as a valid path, and rejects *tawhid* and thinks it is falsehood, as is the predominant reality [today]. The reason for such is due to the ignorance of what the Book and the Sunnah indicate with respect to the knowledge of *tawhid* and the negation of *shirk* and setting up of partners, along with following whims and what one's forefathers were upon, like the situation of their likes of those before them from the enemies of the Messengers. They accused the people of *tawhid* of lies, falsity, nonsense, and immorality. And their only argument was,

بَلْ وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا كَذَلِكَ يَفْعَلُونَ

“No, rather, we found our fathers doing so.”¹⁶

These types of people, and that which comes after it, have contravened what the statement of sincerity shows to be, what was set for it, and what it contains - which is the only *din* that Allah will accept. And it is the *din* of Islam that Allah sent all of His prophets and messengers with. Their call was all in agreement, as is not hidden in what Allah narrates about them in His book.

Then he (*rahimahullah*) said,

And from the people are those who worship Allah alone, but do not reject *shirk* nor have enmity to its people.

I say: from what is known is that whoever does not reject *shirk* does not know

¹⁶ Ash-Shu'ara: 74.

tawhid and has not fulfilled it. Indeed, you know that *tawhid* can not be achieved except with negating *shirk* and having *kufr* in the *taghut*, as mentioned in the *ayah*.

Then he (*rahimahullah*) said,

And from them are those who have enmity to them, but do not declare *takfir* of them.

This type has also not come with what is evidenced from '*la ilaha illallah*' from negating *shirk* and what it implies of declaring *takfir* of whomever commits it - after clarifying this, by consensus. This is contained in *surah al-Ikhlās* and in: "Say: 'O you disbelievers' " and in His statement in the *ayah* of *al-Mumtahanah*: "We have rejected you." And so whoever does not declare *takfir* of whomever the Quran declared *takfir* of, then, he has clashed with what the Messengers have brought from *tawhid* and what it obligates.

Then he (*rahimahullah*) said,

And from them is one who does not love *tawhid* nor does he hate it.

So what is said in reply to this, is that whoever does not love *tawhid* is not a *mumabhid*, because it is the *din* which Allah has chosen and is pleased with for His slaves, as He said,

وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا

"And I have chosen and am pleased with Islam as your *din*."¹⁷

And if he had been pleased with what Allah was pleased with and had acted upon it due to loving Him, then, there must be love. Because Islam without it is not possible. And so there is no Islam except by loving *tawhid*.

¹⁷ Al-Maidah: 3.

Shaykhul-Islam (*rahimahullah*) stated, “Sincerity is the love of Allah and wanting His pleasure.” So whoever loves Allah, loves His *din*, and whoever does not, does not love Allah. Love is what the statement of sincerity implies and is from the conditions of *tawhid*.

Then he (*rahimahullahu ta‘ala*) said,

And from them is one who does not hate *shirk* nor loves it.

I say: Whoever is like that has not negated what ‘*la ilaha illallah*’ has negated from *shirk* and does not have *kufr* in what is worshipped besides Allah and [does not have] *bara’ah* from it. This one has nothing to do at all with Islam. His blood is not protected nor his wealth, as the aforementioned *hadith* has shown.

And his (*rahimahullahu ta‘ala*) statement,

And from them is one who does not know *shirk* nor rejects it.

I say: The one who does not know *shirk* nor rejects it has not negated it. And one can not be considered a *mumabhid* except by negating *shirk* and disassociating from it and whoever performs it, along with *takfir* of them. If one is ignorant of *shirk*, then, what ‘*la ilaha illallah*’ points to can not be accomplished. And one who does not establish the meaning of this statement (i.e. *la ilaha illallah*) and what it contains has nothing at all to do with Islam due to him not fulfilling what it includes from knowledge, certainty, truthfulness, sincerity, love, acceptance, and compliance - and this type of person has none of that. And even if he says ‘*la ilaha illallah*’, he does not know what it means nor what it includes within it.

Then he (*rahimahullahu ta‘ala*) said,

And from them is one who does not know *tawhid* nor rejects it.

This is similar to the one before it. They do not pay any attention to the *din* which Allah sent His messengers with and created them for. And this is the reality of the situation whom Allah spoke about,

إِنَّ هُمْ إِلَّا كَالْأَنْعَامِ بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا

“They are nothing except like cattle. Rather, they are even further astray from the path.”¹⁸

And his (*rahimahullah*) statement,

And from them - and he is the most dangerous type - is the one who acts upon *tanbid* but does not know its worth. He does not hate whoever leaves it and does not declare *takfir* of them.

His words here: ‘and he is the most dangerous type’, is because he does not know the value of what he is acting upon (i.e. *tanbid*). He did not fulfill that which makes his *tanbid* correct from the essential principles which are necessary. When you know that *tanbid* requires negation of *shirk* and disavowal from it and having enmity towards its people and *takfir* of them - with the proof having been established upon them, then you realize that this one is deceived by his situation and has not fulfilled the issues that the statement of sincerity imply: negation and affirmation.

Similarly, his (*rahimahullah*) statement,

And from them is the one who left *shirk* and hates it, but does not know its status.

And this is like the previous one; however, this one does not know the standing of *shirk*. Because if he knew its ranking, then he would act upon the clear *ayat*, like the statement of *al-Khalil*,

إِنِّي بَرَاءٌ مِّمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ إِلَّا الَّذِي فَطَرَنِي

¹⁸ Al-Furqan: 44.

“Indeed, I am free from that which you worship. Except for He who created me.”¹⁹

And his saying,

إِنَّا بُرَاءٌ مِنْكُمْ وَمِمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ كَفَرْنَا بِكُمْ وَبَدَا بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ الْعَدَاوَةُ
وَالْبَغْضَاءُ أَبَدًا

“Verily, we are free from you and from what you worship besides Allah. We have rejected you, and there has appeared enmity and hatred between us and you continuously until you believe in Allah alone.”

Thus doing the above is indispensable for whoever knows *shirk* and left it: *wala* and *bara* from the worshipper and the worshipped, hating *shirk* and its people, and [displaying] enmity towards them. These two types is the situation of many who claim affiliation to Islam. They are ignorant of its reality, which prevents them from achieving the statement of sincerity and what it necessitates from the completion of what is obligatory that makes one a *mumabhid*. Therefore, you should know that Allah declared *takfir* of the people of *shirk* and labelled them with *kufr* in numerous clear *ayat*, like His statement,

مَا كَانَ لِلْمُشْرِكِينَ أَنْ يَغْمُرُوا مَسَاجِدَ اللَّهِ شَاهِدِينَ عَلَى أَنْفُسِهِم بِالْكَفْرِ

“It is not for the *musbrikin* to maintain the *masajid* of Allah while witnessing against themselves with *kufr*.”²⁰

And likewise, you find it in the Sunnah. Shaykhul-Islam [ibn Taymiyyah] stated,

Accordingly, the people of *tawhid* and sunnah believe in the Messengers in what they informed and obey them in what they ordered and preserve what they said and

¹⁹ Az-Zukhruf: 26-7.

²⁰ At-Tawbah: 17.

understand and act upon it. They guard and protect the *din* from the distortions of the extremists, the ones who crop and paste and bend the texts, and from the interpretation of the ignorant. They strive against those who oppose them, in order to come closer to Allah and seeking reward from Allah alone. While the people of ignorance and exaggeration do not distinguish between what they ordered and what they prohibited, nor between what is true and false about and from them. They do not understand the reality of what they wanted, and they do not seek to obey them. Rather, they are ignorant of their actions and put their own wants above all else.

I say: What Shaykhul-Islam mentions here is similar to the reality of the previous two types of people. But an issue remains which is not brought up here, which Shaykhul-Islam ibn Taymiyyah has spoken about, and it is: not declaring *takfir* of the specific individual in the beginning of the affair; reason being what he (*rahimahullahu ta'ala*) mentioned about it being obligatory to refrain from *takfir* before the *hujjah* (proof) is established. He (*rahimahullahu ta'ala*) stated,

We know by necessity that the Prophet did not legislate anyone to call upon anybody who is dead, whether the prophets, the righteous, or anybody else. Not by asking them for help or other than that. Just as he has not legislated for this *ummah* to perform *sujud* (prostration) for the dead nor to them and what is similar to that. Rather, we know that he forbade all of these things and that it is the *shirk* that Allah and His messenger prohibited. But due to the overwhelming ignorance and scantness of knowledge of the traces of the Message among the later generations, it is not possible to declare *takfir* of them due to that until what the Messenger brought is made clear from that which opposes it.

Thus he mentioned that is obligatory to refrain from applying *kufr* upon them absolutely - upon the specific individual - until after the clarification and his persistence. No doubt, he was a one man nation. Due to that, scholars called him a *kafir* because he used to prohibit them from performing *shirk* in *'ibadah*. So it is not possible that he dealt with them like what he said above. And this is similar to what happened with our shaykh, Muhammad ibn 'Abdil-Wahhab (*rahimahullahu ta'ala*) in the beginning of his *da'wah*. When he heard some people invoking Zayd ibnul-Khattab, he said, "Allah is better than Zayd," as a way to prevent them from *shirk* with soft speech for a *maslahah* (benefit) and so

that they wouldn't be averse.

And Allah (*subhanahu wa ta'ala*) knows best. May the *salah* and *salam* of Allah be upon our leader Muhammad, his family, and his companions.

